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Document Number: 1978BUENOS01166

Page: 1

Channel: n/a

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 01166 151845Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 EUR-12 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 /069 W
-----027157 151851Z /53

O 151804Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4563

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 1166

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, AR
SUBJECT: ARGENTINE PRISONER RELEASES

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(☒) Release (☐) Excise (☐) Deny

Exemption(s):

~~Classify~~ (☐) In Part (☒) In Full **DECLASSIFIED**

(☐) Classify as ☐ (☐) Extend as ☐ (☐) Downgrade to ☐

Date ☐ Declassify on ☐ Reason ☐

REF: (A) STATE 37984, (B) BUENOS AIRES 318

1. THE GENERAL IMPRESSION, AS REPORTED IN REFTTEL B, REMAINS THAT THREE QUARTERS OF THE 389 PERSONS LISTED ON THE GOA'S CHRISTMAS RELEASE LIST HAVE IN FACT BEEN PHYSICALLY RELEASED FROM JAIL. OFFICERS OF THIS AND OTHER EMBASSIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS HAVE HEARD OF NUMBERS OF ACTUAL RELEASES.

2. ALTHOUGH THE OVERALL IMPRESSION IS POSITIVE, THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW NEGATIVE INSTANCES REPORTED. THE FRENCH CONSUL GENERAL REPORTED TO EMBOFF IN LATE JANUARY THAT THE FRENCH EMBASSY WAS MAKING A SPECIAL DIPLOMATIC EFFORT ON BEHALF OF A DUAL FRENCH/ARGENTINE NATIONAL FEMALE DETAINED UNDER PEN IN VILLA DEVOTO, WHOSES NAME HAD APPEARED ON THE CHRISTMAS AMNESTY LIST BUT WHO SUBSEQUENTLY WAS NOT RELEASED. WHEN THE WOMAN'S FAMILY ASKED ABOUT THIS AT FIRST CORPS

PAGE 02 BUENOS 01166 151845Z

HEADQUARTERS (A COLONEL GATICA THERE ACTS AS A KIND OF "OMBUDSMAN" IN THESE CASES) THEY WERE TOLD "JUST TO FORGET" THAT HER NAME APPEARED ON THE LIST.

Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 1

UNCLASSIFIED

Current Class: [REDACTED]
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1978BUENOS01166

Page: 2

Channel: n/a

3. THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS HAS FILED "DENUNCIAS" ON BEHALF OF FOUR FORMER INMATES OF LA PLATA PRISON WHO WERE ACTUALLY RELEASED AT MIDNIGHT ON FEBRUARY 3 AND WERE REPORTEDLY PICKED UP BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMY SEVERAL BLOCKS FROM THE PRISON ENTRANCE. THE MEN, GONZALO ABEL CARRANZA, GUILLERMO SEGALLI, A MR. DOMINGUEZ AND A MR. GALLARDO, HAVE NOT BEEN HEARD FROM SINCE. CARRANZA HAD ALMOST COMPLETED A THREE-YEAR SENTENCE FOR POSSESSION OF SUBVERSIVE LITERATURE AND WAS BEING RELEASED ON PAROLE; SEGALLI WAS FOR 17 MONTHS HELD UNDER THE PEN BUT HAD NOT, SO FAR AS WE KNOW HAD HIS NAME PUBLISHED AS AN OFFICIAL RELEASE; WE HAVE NOT INFORMATION ON DOMINGUEZ OR GALLARDO. THE STORY OF THE DISAPPEARANCES WAS CARRIED IN THE BUENOS AIRES HERALD, LA NACION, AND LA RAZON HAS CAUSED UNDERSTANDABLE CONCERN.

4. WE REITERATE THAT THE ASSESSMENTS REPORTED ARE BASED ON SCANT EVIDENCE, AND CAUTION THAT REPORTS OF FOUR DISAPPEARANCES OR PERSONS RELEASED FROM PRISON CANNOT BE EXTRAPOLATED. IT IS WORTH NOTING TOO THAT "RELEASE FROM PEN" CAN LEGITIMATELY RESULT, UNDER CURRENT PROCEDURES, IN A PERSON'S ENMESHMENT IN CHARGES AND A TRIAL--ALL THE WHILE REMAINING INCARCERATED. IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE THIS IS TAKING, EMBASSY WILL RENEW EFFORTS WITH THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR TO BE GIVEN A PRECISE READING ON THE FATE OF INDIVIDUALS WHOSE NAMES APPEAR AS PERSONS "REMOVED FROM PEN."

CASTRO

PAGE 03 BUENOS 01166 151845Z

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Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 2

UNCLASSIFIED